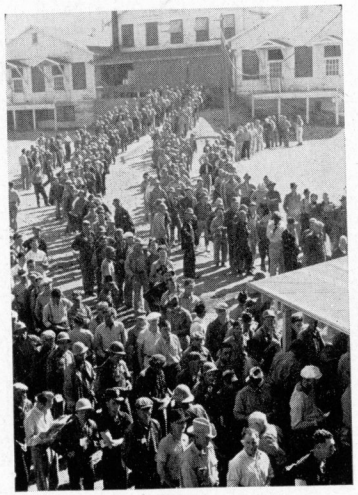
Pay-Rolls Have Included 7,000 Names at One Time

THE principal attraction in Mason City is the chimney-less houses. There, electricity is used for heating, and this modern innovation has drawn countless thousands to the dam to view "the city of tomorrow." However, with all its buildings, it is a temporary town and will be dismantled at the conclusion of the project. Residences, schools, churches, and public buildings go to make up the town, where the bunk-houses alone accommodate 1200 men.

Three of the several small towns which sprang up with the transient influx along the Coulee have been incorporated as Grand Coulee. Also, there are other villages scattered about, and principally occupied by employes at the dam. In 1937, the total population in the vicinity of the site was 15,000 persons.



Old and young, alike, have flocked to the fascinating communities surrounding the huge project. Always, there were willing hands to do the bidding of the men in charge. Payrolls varied, according to the type of work being done, but with the average wage rate ranging between 83 and 90 cents an hour on the first contract and averaging about $1.07 in the later contract, the scale was such that no dearth of help was noticeable. More than 7,000 men have been employed on the dam at one time. Such a beehive of activity almost is a figment of the imagination. Day and night, under the beating rays of the sun or the soft, white illumination of electric lights, the work progressed without interruption. As one shift went off duty, another took over. Men were everywhere.

Clad in rough work clothes, grimed with the desert dust, or splashed with graying concrete, the workmen also were easily identified by their aluminum headgear, a requisite for all employed on the dam.

Men Take Job In Stride

The appearance of the horde was remindful of war days and helmets, except that the protection in this instance is bright and shiny. Many of the helmets were worn at a rakish angle, yet each added something of the stalwart to the wearer, whose shirt was open at the throat—a worker at a glance. To and from the job, each took the Coulee hillsides in confident stride.

The work was a man's doing, yet the clear eye of the worker which greeted the tourist bespoke the enjoyment of life to the fullest. He had a job, and work was to be done—a man's work—and there was pride in his every movement. Young men, and those who have looked out upon many lesser jobs, rubbed shoulders in the performance of the task which would be herculean if it were not for the man-made machines these same men demanded to do their bidding instantly at the touch of a switch or a lever.